COLLECTORS CORNER NO. 90 JULY 9, 1976
PAUL FRANCUCH

HATS OFF TO ALABAMA'S JEANNIE MURPHY
(VOICED PIECE, INSERTS IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR: AND NOW, COLLECTOR'S CORNER, THE VOICE OF AMERICA SERIES OF PROGRAMS FOR LISTENERS WHO COLLECT THINGS, WHETHER THEY BE STAMPS OR COINS, SNUFF BOTTLES OR OLD AUTOS, OR EVEN BALLS OF STRING. HERE'S THIS WEEK'S REPORT, PREPARED BY PAUL FRANCUCH:

VOICE: IF YOU'RE ONE OF THE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD WHO'S SEEN THE FILM "GONE WITH THE WIND," JEANNIE MURPHY MIGHT SEEM TO YOU THE STEREOTYPE OF AMERICA'S "SOUTHERN BELLE." JEANNIE'S A STUDENT IN SOCIAL WORK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN TUSCALOOSA AND HAS A COLLECTION OF OLD CLOTHES, JEWELRY, SHOES, AND A WALL STUDDED WITH HATS OF ALL SHAPES AND SIZES:

TAPE: CUT ONE -- MURPHY

"ONE HAT I GOT THIS YEAR IS A VIETNAMESE HAT MADE OUT OF STRAW. IT'S IN A CONE SHAPE THAT GOES ALL AROUND AND ALMOST COVERS BELOW THE EYEBROWS. I REALLY LIKE IT. IT'S MADE OF NICE STRAW- AND SEEMS TO PROTECT YOU PRETTY WELL FROM THE SUN. THEN I HAVE SOME OTHER ONES THAT ARE MADE OUT OF ITALIAN STRAW WITH BIG VELVET RIBBONS. SOME OF THEM ARE VERY DECORATIVE. I HAVE A SMALL HAT THAT WAS WORN IN THE 1940'S THAT HAD A BUNCH OF PINE CONES ON IT -- JUST SMA-L PINE CONES WITH GREEN NET, STRICTLY FOR DECORATION. A LOT OF THEM HAD PAPER AND CLOTH FLOWERS AS DECORATIVE PIECES ON THEM."

VOICE: JEANNIE MURPHY DISPLAYS HER COLLECTION OF SIXTY DIFFERENT HATS NOT ONLY ON HER APARTMENT WALL, BUT ON HER HEAD AS WELL. SHE'S BEEN COLLECTING FOR TWO YEARS NOW, AND ENJOYS WEARING THE BIG-BRIMMED PICTURE-BOOK BONNETS WHEREVER SHE GOES.

VOICE: (CONT) HER OUTFITS ARE CAREFULLY COORDINATED FASHIONS, USUALLY OF THE 1940'S. JEANNIE MURPHY ALWAYS WEARS CALF-LENGTH SKIRTS AND DRESSES. AND HER LIPSTICK IS ALWAYS DEEP RED.

HER CLOTHING, AND MOST NOTABLY HER HATS, ARE ALL SECOND-HAND. SO HER CLOTHES SHOPPING IS LIMITED TO SECOND-HAND STORES AND THRIFT SHOPS:

TAPE: CUT TWO -- MURPHY

"YOU GO INTO A MILLINERY SHOP HERE IN TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA, AND YOU FIND VERY FEW HATS THAT ARE OUT OF THE ORDINARY. STRAW HATS IN THE SUMMERTIME, BASICALLY -- THE SAME TYPES AND STYLES. VERY FEW HATS HAVE THEIR VERY OWN CHARACTER, OR ARE UNIQUE LIKE THEY WERE THEN. IT WAS QUITE A THING FOR WOMEN TO HAVE DIFFERENT HATS. IT WAS A MARK OF INDIVIDUALITY."

VOICE: MOST OF THE OTHER STUDENTS ON THE TUSCALOOSA CAMPUS WEAR BLUE JEANS, LOOSE SHIRTS, SNEAKERS AND OTHER GARB TYPICAL OF AMERICAN YOUTH. NONE OF THE OTHER STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY DRESSES LIKE 22-YEAR-OLD JEANNIE MURPHY AND SHE STANDS OUT:

TAPE: CUT THREE -- MURPHY

"THE FIRST TIME PEOPLE SEE ME, I'M SURE THEY'RE MOST DEFINITELY SURPRISED AND DON'T KNOW WHETHER I AM CRAZY, OR WHAT I'M INTO OR WHAT STAGE OF THE GAME I'M GOING THROUGH."

VOICE: BUT COED JEANNIE MURPHY ISN'T CRAZY. SHE'S JUST IN LOVE WITH HER COLLECTION OF CLOTHES AND HATS REMINISCENT OF EARLIER TIMES. HISTORY HAS ALWAYS BEEN A FAVORITE SUBJECT OF HERS, AND SHE BELIEVES MUCH CAN BE LEARNED BY EXAMINING THE CLOTHING OF THE PAST.

TAPE: CUT FOUR -- MURPHY

"THEY HAVE A LOT OF STORIES TO TELL ABOUT THE LIFESTYLES PEOPLE LED. THERE WERE A LOT OF LEISURE HOURS IN THE SOUTH IN YEARS GONE BY. THINGS WERE NOT GOING AT THE FAST PACE THAT THEY ARE NOW, AND YOU CAN TELL BY THE CLOTHING. THEY SPENT MORE TIME TO PREPARE IN DRESSING. THEIR CLOTHES TOOK MORE CARE, SHOWED MORE EFFORT ON THEIR PART. JUST SO MANY THINGS. I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO BE ABLE TO LIVE IN THE PAST, AND I GUESS THAT'S THE ONLY TOUCH THAT I'LL HAVE WITH IT."

VOICE: AS WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE WOULD HAVE PUT IT: "SHE WEARS HER FAITH BUT AS THE FASHION OF HER HAT." (FROM "MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING," GENDER CHANGED.)

ANNCR: YOU'VE BEEN LISTENING TO COLLECTOR'S CORNER, THE WEEKLY VOICE OF AMERICA PROGRAM FOR LISTENERS WHO COLLECT THINGS ... FROM STAMPS AND COINS ... TO HATS. JOIN US AGAIN NEXT FOR ANOTHER COLLECTOR'S CORNER. PRODUCTION ASSISTANCE IN TODAY'S SHOW WAS PROVIDED BY KAREN BETH MAEL IN ALABAMA.

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